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NSC BRIEFING

POLAND

- I. Polish-Soviet relations may now have reached their most critical stage since October 1956.
 - A. Poland is only Bloc country that has not yet approved Nagy executions.
 - B. Poles have still not gotten into line with Bloc in bitter condemnation of Tito.
 - C. Unless Gomulka's attitude changes, showdown over these issues in near future between him and Kremlin seems inevitable.
- II. If Gomulka holds to his present course we believe Moscow will ultimately try to unseat him.
 - A. Moscow's strongest weapons are economic pressures and military force.
 1. Poland is dependent on the USSR for most of its raw materials (iron ore, petroleum).
 2. Polish Army, which probably loyal to regime, could not last long against forces available to Soviets.
 - B. However, Soviets have Hungarian experiences before them--this time problem would be compounded by unstable East German situation.
 - C. Therefore, they probably prefer to oust Gomulka by political action, backing Polish Stalinist elements (Mazur, Dworakowski, Klosiewicz) in an attempt to regain control of the Polish party.
- III. Against such an attack, Gomulka could only with difficulty maintain his supremacy in party shaken by fears and uncertainties.

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A. His most effective weapon is the strong anti-Sovietism of Polish party and people.

1. Thus even a successful move to oust him runs the risk of serious internal disorders.

IV. If Gomulka has not decided he must make a firm stand now, he may make relatively mild compromise statement on Nagy question such as he did on Yugoslav issue.

A. Such a statement, however, would only postpone crisis and might not be acceptable to Moscow in its present mood.